

THE
DUTCH Way of Toleration,

Most proper for our

ENGLISH DISSENTERS.

Written at the Request of a Friend.

O! Imitatores servum pecus.

Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea Nodus?

Hor.

be free, and not using your Liberty for a Cloak of Malicia
ciousness, &c. St. Pet. Ep. I. Ch. 2. V. 16.

The Second Edition.

L O N D O N,

Printed in the Year, 1699.

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Moff printed for our

ENGLISH DISSENTERS

Written at the Request of a Friend

Of Unitarians (formerly Dissenters)
Quakers and Unitarians Protestants
Hoc

the first and not a copy for a Clerk of Justice
Chancery, Sec. 2d. P. 1. Ch. 2. V. 16.

Second Edition

LONDON

Printed in the Year 1800

THE PREFACE

TO THIS

SECONDED EDITION.

The following Prospect of the Dutch Toleration, was taken upon the Spot more than Thirty Years since, where the Party had the Advantage of a full and frequent View, residing there a considerable time with one of Publick Character; and tho' never before drawn upon Paper, much less expos'd to the Sight and Censure of the World, 'till the other day, yet is the representation no ways defective, for that ever since his Return, he hath had too much occasion to reflect upon the Impressions there fix'd, by comparing them with the many Mistakes, Impertinencies, and Abuses of their sordid Imitators here.

Two Things, more especially, have been both his Wonder and Indignation; First, That having so good, so exact an Original of our own, we should affect so much to Copy after others: And then, Secondly, what they affect to Copy, are only the Weakest and Worst wrought Parts; which, taken from the Symmetry of the rest, carry much of Deformity with them, having neither Art nor Order to see them off; yet these, farsooth, must be daub'd upon our foremenition'd Original, with design daubless to expose, and utterly deface it in the End, a strange Insatiation this, that Men must be humour'd with, a Religion, made up of such uncouth, Dissimilar Proportions, as Horace would allow of neither in Painting, nor Poetry, without a Spectatum Admissi, &c. although it ought to excite a quite contrary Passion in every good Christian.

And as regard herunto, that our English World might understand what Mischiefs have already, and must farther accrew from such Patching, Daubing Designs, this little Piece stole abroad last Spring, amongst that numerous Spawn the Teeming Press hath forth; yet so, as neither Friend nor Foe, (but the Party who engag'd him) knew at what from what hand it came, the Designer having a just Suspicion, that as the Sincerity of his Plain-dealing Conversation had been more uneasy than he could first imagine, in this Time-serving Age, so those Prejudices might be still continued against whatever he publish'd, however uprightly design'd, and demonstratively true, whereas coming under the Disguise of a Third Person, as unconcern'd in the Matter, he met an impartial and candid Verdict; viz. They could not see where the Dissenters were able to raise the least Exception, for that 'twas all clear Matter of Fact, what ought to have been considered at first; and since they persevare to drive on at the same Jehu-rate, if it be not considered in due time, and that quickly too, they will drive all into Confusion.

And having thus pass'd the Pikes amongst his Friends, what those others say, or think, is the least of his Concern, having all along observ'd, how uneasy they are to be inform'd of any thing which tends to a Settlement, though amongst the rest, of their very selves: Opposing, and Pulling down, is the Delight of their Souls; and if they cannot wreck their Spite upon the Church of England, and all that adhere to her, nothing shall continue in Peace, or rest in Quiet: For Confirmation whereof, take this Passage; A Person of great Eminency, and very well acquainted with the Transactions of that Party, as well as most other Affairs, did lately, upon a Publick Occasion, declare that the Dissenters address'd them-

The Preface.

selfes to the Devils, those profess'd Enemies of all Revel'd Religion, (and who abound too much in most great Posts and Places) to abett and countenance them in their Separation. Whereas doubtless these Free-booters in Religion, if they be true Politicians, as they would by all means be thought, and must be so, or nothing, will consider what Dio Cass. tells us Meccenas advis'd Augustus, upon his first Settlement of the Roman Empire, That he should follow constantly the Religion establish'd, for all Innovations therein tended to Sedition, and would subvert his Government. However the Pious Endeavours of those others cannot surprize any one, who recollects what grateful Acknowledgments were made, when their good Friend Father Petres oblig'd them with a Plenary Indulgence, throwing all open by a Dispensing Power, that the Forfeitures which those of their Lay-Brotherhood incur'd, by doing thereupon, should never be taken notice of, when Ways and Means rack'd all the Business Wits of the Nation, was a great Favour or great Forgetfulness; had any Body of Churchmen run themselves into such a Premunire, what a violent Clamor would it have made both within Doors, and without? But a Fanatick may Reel the Horse with more Security, than another Man look over the Hedge. Although the forementioned Address to the Devils, if truly, might proceed from their more Publick Disappointments, in referencs to this present Parliament, for as their early and earnest Solicitations upon that account, were partly the occasion of this little Tract, according to what is therein hinted, so hath it been ever since observ'd with how indefatigable an Application they endeavour'd to procure Chosen Members of their own Pre-lection; tho', with no little satisfaction, it shall be acknowledg'd their Manœuvres and Baffles therein, hath abundantly exceeded Expectation: For in most Counties throughout the Kingdom, either they dar'd not so hazard the Courts, or were shamefully distant if they did; neither met they with much better Success in the several Corporations and Burroughs, Men by degrees are grown so wise, at leastwise in their Generation, as to think it will turn to better account, if they chuse to serve themselves, rather than a Faction.

Yet notwithstanding these, and many such like vile Compliances, with Papists, Devils, Atheists, and what not? so just y chargeable upon them, they can have the confidence still to continue their old Calumny of Popery upon the Church of England, and every true Member thereof, unwilling to remember, though they cannot forget, with how discreet a Zeal, and well manag'd Resolution, she behav'd her self in that Critical Juncture, when all the several Sects and Factions, sneak'd like Cowards, or something worse, not here to be nam'd. Upon which their unjust, and frontless Freedom, some have thought it a little hard, that at the Act of Indulgence takes a great care, on the one hand, to secure the Dissenters from the least Disturbance or Affront, under a severe Penalty; so there should be no Provision, on the other, to restrain them from bringing any Charge against the Members, or Offices of the Church, which they could not justify: But wise Men would not attempt an Impossibility, knowing they might have as well enjoy'd an eternal Silence amongst the Females at Billingsgate. The Liberty of their Consciences had been nothing without that of their Tongues, by which more especially they think to prevail, and will have none to be Lords over them. Upon which Charge of the Psalmist against wicked Men, Psal. 12. 4. the Learned and Pious Hammond makes this Paraphrase: Why should we stand so strictly to consider, whether what we say be true or no? So we may advantage our selves by it, to whom should we be accountable for that?

In fine, 'tis as natural for most of the several Separations to bark at the Church of England, as a Dog at the Moon, and according to conjecture, for the same reason, they envy her Splendor, and Prevention of dark Designs, which may God continue and advance, (for she seems at present to be in the decay) and let them bark on till their Throats can hold out no longer; in hopes, nevertheless, our World may by degrees discover from what Spirit such Railing Accusations come; And the Lord in his due time Rebuke them. Amen.

THE DUTCH *Way* of Toleration,

Most proper for our

ENGLISH DISSENTERS.

S I R,

THIS returns my Thanks, for the Favour of your last, and candid Acknowledgment, that I had reason in affirming, “ the *Sword* would continue to halt it on between St. Paul’s and Pinner’s-Hall, as long as this Man was Mayor; for now you were come over to my Opinion, and saw it would not only be so, but that his Successor, finding the *Ice* thus broken, would, probably, follow in the same Track, or otherwise improve the Affront to our old Establishments, according as the several Fashions, which plac’d him in the Chair, should think fit to direct: Hereupon you desire me to communicate what I know in reference to the Dutch Toleration, (whereof you have heard several hints in our private Converse) and how it comes to pass, that the many differing Perswasions amongst them, enjoy their Liberty with a continued Peace and Quiet, whereas ours are always restless and encroaching, every day grasping at more, and seem still dissatisfied unless they can engross all.

Indeed, Sir, it was to my no little surprize, when last in Town, to find your self, and some other Friends, so positive, that a Reprimand from the Court of Aldermen, and some by-Reflections in an Higher Court, would stifle their Design, or make them give it over, which I perceived was deeper laid, and had greater Encouragements, than any of you did then imagine; yet sure this you must have ob-

serv'd, that 'tis very rare to find those *Parties* doing their business by halves; whatever *Lights* they may pretend to, there is an insaluble Argument to prove them *Children of this World*, being so wise, that is, *cunning*, in their *Generations*. No People carry on their *Projects* with greater *Intrigue*, nor more nicely observe the several *steps* and *degrees* by which they must be accomplished: Their *Legal Indulgence*, as it was a great Point gain'd, so the timing of it was very critical; for, being in the heat of the *Revolution*, there might be several *Casus omitti*, which upon farther Debate would have been better considered; particularly, I question very much, whether any *Dissenter* would have been allow'd going to the *Conventicle* during his *Magistracy*, especially to carry the *Insignia* thither; the former of which hath been all along practis'd in several *Corporations* throughout the Kingdom; and, doubtless, the *President* your *Lord Mayor* has set, will be Ap'd by several of his *Brethren* in other Places: (notwithstanding, as the Act runs at present, 'tis a *Moot Case* among the Gentlemen of the *Long Robe*, whether allowable thereby) But that your *Lord Mayor* may not have the sole *Honour* of the first Attempt, at least, that was done the First Year of their *Indulgence*, at a *Corporation* in my Neighbourhood, where an old *Zealot* of the 41 Cause (brought in perhaps for that purpose) would needs have the *Mace* attend him to the *Barn*; but the honesty, or as they term'd it, obstinacy of the *Officers*, the *Sergeants*, would not comply, and so he went without it. Afterwards, indeed, when one of the same Stamp was in course to be chosen, the *Company* capitulated, that however the *Mayor* might take his liberty, the *Mace* would be confin'd to *Church*; which some though a little hard on the *Mace's* side, since 'twas believ'd every whit as tender-conscience'd as the Man who follow'd it.

But, to return to our purpose, you see how their Affairs stand at present, and how little they scruple stretching to the utmost any *Liberty* which is indulg'd them, whereof now they have a fair Prospect to make a greater enlargement; for you know next Winter a New *Parliament* will come in course, and they are so far from being ignorant thereof, or idle thereupon, as 'tis hard for a Person of your *undesigned Integrity*, to imagine how earnestly they already fickle to carry on their Point in that *Critical Juncture*, leave never a Stone unturn'd, are tampering with all *Interests*, and in all Places, to get confiding Members chosen, such *Root* and *Branch-men*, as shall effectually carry on the *Work of the Lord*, and once more establish the *Good Old Cause*; and then let the *State* look to it as well as the *Church*, for 'tis hard to resolve whether suffer'd most from such

such *thorough Reformers*. Now this to me is Demonstration, that a *Religious Liberty*, a *Freedom as to their Consciences*, is not the sole, nor main thing they aim at; for then would they press no farther, that being confirm'd to them by *Legal Establishment*, to all Intents and Purposes imaginable: But to be dabbling in the *Government*, is as natural to them as *Water* to a *Fish*; and if they may not command the *Royalty*, and controul at Pleasure, prescribe who are worthy *Men*, and *Men worthy*, those Waters will be always troubled; never free from foul *Weather*, and *Storms*: Nay, farther to remark, how scandalously they prostitute their *Spiritual Liberty*, their *Right of Conscience*, to obtrude themselves upon the *Temporal Power*, their double dealing, playing fast and loose with our *Church* and *Sacrament*, is an irrefragable Argument. Formerly, the *Church of England* (to use their great *Patriarch's* *J. Q's* Words) was a meer *Antichristian Encroachment upon the Inheritance of Christ*, all her *Darling-Errors*, *Stones of the Old Babel*; and therefore by no means to be communicated with: *The Faithful of the Lord must not touch such defiled Garments*; and this indeed was the common *Cant* of them all, for some score of Years together: Yet now we see, to serve a *State-turn*, or rather overturn the *State*, the *Holy Sacrament* goes down as glib with them, as the *Covenant* of old; there is no *Scruple*, when the *Cause* is concern'd: In the mean while, I dare engage, that if this next *Election*, they can make a *Party* prevalent enough to repeal the *Test*, as they have already cancell'd the other *Penal Laws*, they will return to their Old *Invectives*, Our *Sacrament* shall be *Reprobated as an Antichristian Rite*, and all *Communion with our Church* sinful and *abominable*. Now here, if they would give me leave to expostulate a little, I would desire them to consider, whether any thing can bring a greater reproach upon *Religion*, the *Innocence*, and *Simplicity* of the *Gospel*, than such vain *Tergiversations* as these? Such *Limy Woolly Consciences*: Such *profane Halvers between God and Baal*? Can we imagine there should be any thing more in all these *Mockeries*, than a *sordid Interest*, *spiteful Revenge*, or *popular Humour*? To be cry'd up by the *Factions*, and make something of a *Figure* amongst the *Mob-Sectaries*, which they despair'd of obtaining from Men of *Sense* and *Principles*. This indeed is not exactly the *Laodicean Temper*; but the little difference is for the worse, being so hot, where they need not be so much as *lukewarm*, and less than so, where they should express a *religious Fervour*: And since *Almighty God* threatened to *spew the former out of his Mouth*, I fear his *Blessings* may be the less, if these others be not *spew'd out of the Government*.

And this, Sir, brings me to the *Question* you propounded; (and what I presume was chiefly aim'd at in the Acknowledgment you made) *How it comes to pass the Dutch live in so much Peace and Quiet, notwithstanding the many Persuasions tolerated amongst them?* Which may be clearly answered in very few Words; viz. because no such troublesome, uneasie People, as aforementioned, have to do in the Government. And I have sometimes admired our great Sticklers for Liberty, and Toleration, who upon all occasions are too forward in crying up the *Low-Country Model*, and pretending to be of a much quicker Scent than others, never hit off this; but, upon second Thoughts considered, they generally belong to some of the *Factions*, and would be sure not to exclude themselves: Yet, doubtless, what *Horace* observes in Poetry, is as true in Politicks, *Decipit exemplar vitiis imitabile*, 'tis hard coming at the same end, without the like means; to imitate their Toleration, without their Caution and Restrictions, will not only be sordid, as the Poet terms it, but ineffectual; prove a Remedy worse than the Disease; for from thence, more especially, it proceeds, that their Toleration has turn'd to Account: In all other Places, where Universal and Unlimited, it has fallen a Prey to the undermining Stratagems of that *Spiritual Usurper* upon all *Christian Liberty* whatsoever, as will hereafter appear. For your fuller satisfaction therefore, I shall give you an Account of the *Dutch Toleration*; as likewise how hard it will be to bring us to that *Model*, and yet shew you 'tis that alone can do our business; all other Courses will be much more unpracticable, and unsafe, and multiply those Distractions which we design'd to prevent. And that you may give the greater Credit to what I shall say herein, it shall not depend upon my sole Authority (though it was my chief Enquiry during some Years abode there) but have the Confirmation of Sir *William Temple's Observations* upon those *Provinces*; which, as I think it was the first, so 'tis, generally believed, the exactest Piece we have had from that Ingenious Gentleman; Clear Matter of Fact, without that partiality and by-respect, which many times is not avoided by such as pretend most thereunto.

Now what makes it seem more difficult and unpracticable among us, than them, is, That the Constitution of their Government, and Temper of their People, will be found better adapted thereunto, with some other Advantages of lesser Moment; All which take, as follows.

First, Then the Constitution of Their Government seems better adapted thereunto: To which purpose, I must let you know, that however those *Provinces* are given out to be a *Common-Wealth*, a

Free

Free State, with such other swelling Titles of Liberty, Priviledges, &c. as if the People had the sole Controll, the *Dernier Resort*, in all Publick Determinations, (and so indeed it was in those little Democracies of Greece, and that great one of Rome, where no Laws could be enacted, nor *Magistrates* chosen, &c. but by their Consent) upon Enquiry it will appear quite otherwise; the *Populace*, the *Burghers*, have no more to do in the Government, than you and I, if we dwelt, or but sojourn'd amongst them: 'Tis the exactest *Oligarchy* that is this day, or perhaps ever was in the World, where the *Magistrates* of every *City*, or *Province*, are as absolute as any *Prince* in *Christendom*: Enact Laws, levy Taxes, chuse one another into the several Offices of Government, and upon a *Vacancy* (which seldom happens, but by death) elect another to fill up their number, without any controll, but from their *Stadtholder*, who hath a negative Voice, or somewhat like it in all their *Elections*; and though a reasonable Check, is what their *Hogan Moganships* have been most uneasy under, and endeavoured more than once to free themselves from. Sir W. T. instances more particularly in the City of *Amsterdam*, as chief of the *Province of Holland*, and in that, as chief of *Obs. p. 97.* the *Seven Provinces*; "and tells you, the Government of that City is "in the sole management of *Thirty six Persons*, whom he calls *Senators*; and saith, indeed, they were formerly chosen by the Voices "of the *Richer Burghers*, or *Freemen* of the *City*; who, upon the "death of a *Senator*, met together either in a *Church*, a *Market*, or "some other Place, spacious enough to receive their Numbers, "and there made an *Election* of the Person to succeed, by a *Majority* of *Voices*. But about One hundred and thirty, or forty "Years ago, when the *Towns of Holland* began to encrease in "Circuit and People, so as these frequent Assemblies grew into "danger of *Tumult* and *Disorders*, upon every occasion, by reason "of their *Number* and *Contentions*; this *Election* of *Senators*, came "by the *Resolution* of the *Burghers* in one of their General *Assemblies*, to be devolv'd for ever upon the standing *Senate* for that "time; so that ever since when any of their Number dies, a new "one is chosen by the rest of the *Senate*, without any intervention of the other *Burghers*, which makes the Government a sort of "*Oligarchy*, and very different from a popular Government, as it "is generally esteemed by those, who passing, or living in these "Countries, content themselves with common Observations, or "Inquiries. And this *Resolution* of the *Burghers* either was agreed "upon, or followed, by General Consent, or Example, about "the same time, in all the *Towns of the Provinces*, tho' with some difference

" difference in the Number of the *Senators*. Thus far the fore-mentioned *Gentleman*; whereto I must farther add, that these *Senators* both here, and in all other *Towns*, are of the same *Communion*, as to the *Publick Exercise of Religion*; which, after some *Debates*, and *Alterations*, upon their *Defection from Spain*, was fix'd upon the *Geneva-Model*, with an *Allay of Erastianism*, the better to keep under the *Insolency* of their *Presbyteries*, so troublesome elsewhere. 'Tis not of much moment to tell you farther, that as these *Senators* marry generally into one anothers *Families*, so they keep the *Government*, for the most part, amongst themselves, the *Children*, with other *Relations*, coming in, and gradually ascending, if capable of it; which nevertheless being faithfully discharg'd, without *Partiality*, *Avanice*, or any other such by-respects, the *People* seem no ways dissatisfied therewith.

This, Sir, is a small *Scratch* of the Present Establishment of that *People*, which I shall farther confirm to you, upon the *Authority* of the present *Bishop of Sarum*; who, speaking of the *Low Countries*, how they got their *Liberty*, and how they maintain'd it, adds, yet after all this, though the Name of their Government has a greater
Peace and Union, p. 9. found towards Liberty than our own, we are really the much freer People of the two, where every Man has a more open access to a proportion'd Share in the Government, than among them.

The high-flown *Demagogues* of our Nation, I know, will censure this as a great defect, a giving up their *Rights*, a betraying their *Priviledges*, with a great deal such like *Commonwealth-Cant*, as has betray'd us into confusion more than once; whereas doubtless those thoughtful People made a sober Judgment of Things, and well understood such *Priviledges* not worth keeping, as tended only to the distraction of their *Debates*, and might, in the end, destroy their *Government*: To be sure the *General Toleration*, which followed soon after, could have stood upon no other Bottom; and those at the *Helm* were so well satisfy'd, with this New *Constitution*, as to set the *Sovereignty* of all the *Seven Provinces* upon the same

Sir W. T. Foot: For so the Assembly of the States General, which consisted of a-
p. 110. bove Eight hundred Persons, who meeting together in one Place from so many several Parts, gave too great a shock to the whole Body of the Union, made their *Debates* long, and sometimes confused, the *Resolutions* slow, and upon sudden Occasions out of time, was by mutual Consent of the whole Body, devolved upon those, now call'd the *States General*, which consists of so many *Deputies* from each Province, more or less, as they are pleas'd to send; which makes no difference, as to their *Votes*, because given according to their several Provinces, not number of Persons,

Persons, although their number seldom arise to so many as the *Senate* at *Amsterdam* consists of.

Now, Sir, to come to the *disparity*, in reference to our selves, none of this is done, or must be thought of amongst us, as to the whole *Body* of the *Government*; which, though a *Free Monarchy*, is so well temper'd, as we see every *Subject* own'd to have more *Liberty*, than under a *Free State*: 'Tis pity it should be so much abused; yet since it is so, might not there be some *Abridgment* as to particular *Persons*, without the least *Infraction* upon the whole *Constitution*, an *Exchange* of *Temporal* for a *Spiritual Liberty*? They that will have a *New Religion*, let them live according to this *New Model* of our *Neighbours*, and forbear meddling in *Civil Concerns*; otherwise I cannot see how the *Old Establishment* should be long upheld: For whilst the *Tolerated Parties* are free to *Vote*, and put in their *Claims* to all *Publick Administrations*, all *Offices of Honour, Trust, or Profit*; they may carry things as they please; what thorough their *Industry* and *Importunity*, *Cabals* and *Clamours*, *Libels* and *Lies*, 'tis as possible to stop a raging Sea, as the *Madness* of such *People*; No *Man* of *Sence* will attempt it; for tho' they are divided amongst themselves, in *Doctrines*, *Modes of Worship*, and *Forms of Government*, *Ephraim* against *Manasseh*, and *Manasseh* against *Ephraim*; yet the *Judah* of the *Church of England*, is the united *Object* of all their *Spites*, and what they study most implacably to supplant and destroy: And if we reflect how many of them, in the late *Reign*, comply'd with the *Dispensing Power*, and superseded all those *Laws* which the *Nation*, for above an hundred *Years* successively, had compil'd to secure the *Protestant Religion*, there needs no *Window* into any of their *Breasts*, (as a leading *Holder-Forth* then wish'd in an *Address*) to discover the *Reality* of their *Intentions*, 'tis too clear from thence, and all their other *Practices*, that the *Church of England* is the only *Popery* they have a *Pique* against; and can confederate with that which is really so; nay, *Turk* or *Jew*, to effect its *Ruine*. In my *Judgment*, therefore, it would be a very reasonable, and necessary *Test*, (and, I fancy, reduce the truly conscious *Dissenters* to a very small number) to try the sincerity of their *Intentions*, and steadiness of their *Principles*, by an *Indulgence* of that *Liberty* they are so zealous for, upon *Condition* not to intermeddle in *Civil Affairs*, which their weak *Understandings*, strong *Prejudices*, and vain *Enthusiasms*, render them most unqualified for: Will the *Freeholder*, even to the *Cottager*, with his *Cabbage-ground* and *Apple-Tree*, recede from the *Right* he has of throwing up his *Cap* at a *Country-Election*? The *Members* of small-

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ler *Burroughs*, as well as larger *Corporations*, of putting their *Designs* to an Expence upon the like account, together with being on the *Livery*, strutting at *Common Halls*, *Common Councils*, and the like? Nay, even in Country-Parishes, will they recede from serving as *Constable* in their turns, controlling the Poor as *Overseers*, or *Parsons* as *Church-Wardens*? So likewise the *Country-Gentleman*: how will he take being left out of the *Peace*, or not, appearing upon the *Bench* at *Sessions*, and *Affizes*, as well as his *Conforming Neighbours*? If I mistake not the Temper of the several *Parties*, these little things will be of hard digestion, since they have been ever observ'd as forward to *Command*, as uneasy to *Obeey*; yet if we would go according to the *Low-Country-Plan*, (to use the New Word) this course must be taken; for 'tis this alone has secur'd them, and this, or nothing, will secure us: And therefore a very *learned Person*, about Eighteen or Twenty Years since, who understood the *Unreasonableness* of our several *Separations* extremely well, had fully studied all their *Cavils*, and as fully evinc'd them, if any thing of *Eviscion* could work upon that sort of People:

Pref. p. 85. Yet, in his Preface to that *Demonstrative Piece*, whether it was to let the *Dissenters* see, he was averse to nothing which might tend to a *Settlement*, or propounded it from a Friend, whose Head hath been always pregnant with *Comprehension*, and *Toleration-Projects*: Or, perhaps, to humour some great Men at the *Helm*, who about that time stickled very much for a *Suspension* of *Penal Laws*; upon what Design, as every Eye then discover'd, so, I fear, in spite of all Endeavours to the contrary, that Design will be ever concern'd therein, and advanc'd thereby; I say, upon whatever Account it was, this *Reverend Worthy Person*, in his Preface, makes a short *Essay* as to a *Toleration*, laying down such *Restrictions* and *Limitations*, as are requisite to prevent the *Mischiefs* of an unlimited *Licentiousness*, which, he saith, would certainly bring *Confusion* amongst us, and in the end, *Popery*: Now the first of his *Restrictions*, is, That none be permitted this *Indulgence*, who do not declare, that they hold all *Communion* with our Church unlawful; for it seems unreasonable to allow it to others, and will give countenance to endless and causeless *Separations*. And give me leave to add, will gratifie the *Capricios* of such wanton *Libertines*, as live *Scepticks*, and dye *Atheists*: To which kind of *Scepticism* I find several, who associate with, at least, and abett, the *Dissenters*, much inclin'd, *Quere*, as to your Lord M---- Another *Restriction* is, That no Person, so indulg'd, be capable of any *Publick Office*; it being unreasonable, that such should be trusted with *Government*, who look upon what the Government hath already establish'd, as unlawful.

lawful: A Third is, That all such as enjoy it, must declare the particular Congregation they are of; and enter their Names before such Commissioners as shall be authoriz'd to that purpose. I shall mention no more, (tho' there be several others tending to the same purpose) but only appeal whether you, or any Man else of sober Sense, must not acknowledge these to be highly reasonable, and absolutely necessary, that we may know what *Men* are, and where to have them. In *Martial Law*, none are more severely proceeded against, than such as fly from their own, or are taken as *Spies* in the Enemies *Camp*; yet we must suffer these Enemies of our Church, tho' they have been all along in the *Dissenters Service*, to enter our *Line* at pleasure, take our *Word*, our *Test*, and *Sacrament*; that they may be the better qualified to work our Ruine; nay, are so stupidly senceless, as not only to let them alone, but entertain and caress them as Friends: Just thus the *Amalakites* serv'd *Israel*, and we know how highly Almighty *God* was incens'd thereat, and what the People suffer'd thereby. But not to ramble too far, or be thought too much concern'd upon the *Church-Account*, let us consider our *Government* in General, whether it can be so well secur'd by such an *Hodge-podge* of Perswasions, who will be continually pulling several ways, and aiming at several Interests? As the *Low Countries*, where a few understanding Men, *All* unanimously for the *Publick Welfare*, without any by-Regards, or *Fatious Designs*.

Secondly, What I mentioned, in the next place, by way of *Disparity*, as likely to make a *Toleration* less feasible amongst us, than the *Dutch*, is the different *Temper* and *Honours* of the Two *Nations*: They are a serious, and thoughtful People, wholly intent upon their own private Concerns, and very industrious in all their particular *Callings*; frugal and parsimonious to the utmost; truly speaking, necessitated thereunto, by reason of the many and continual *Imposts* laid upon them, which no People under Heaven so contentedly bear, nor so indefatigably wade through, being abundantly satisfied with the *Prudence* and *Integrity* of their *Governours*, and highly transported with an imaginary Conceit of *Liberty*, which no body can see into, or understand, but themselves: So that, as the forementioned *Gentleman* observes, *All Appetites and Passions seem to run lower here, than in other Countries*. I am sure they do not run so low in ours, which, on the contrary, is too sanguine to be settled as it ought; for, to pass by that old Charge of *Rex Diabolorum*, the *English* good Nature, was so strangely sow'd by our late Times of *Libertinism*, and *Confusion*, Men contracted such a habit of *Self-conceit*, *Opposition*, and *Disobedience*, were so totally given

over to a perverse *Enthusiastical* Spirit; and for so long a time, as now indeed it may be look'd upon, next to impossible, absolutely to *conquer* it down; yet doubtless it ought to be confin'd to its own home, the *melancholy Tombs* of their restless unquiet Thoughts, and not wander up and down the World, to possess others with the *Legions* of such *Frenzies*; which, if let alone, will certainly be; for 'tis a *Pestilent Infection*, and without due Caution spreads like the *Plague*. And that this unhappy Disposition began from the *Separation-Fraternity*, and is much more incident to the *English*, than *Dutch* Temper, take this single Instance: There were more *Disputes*, *Contests*, and *Quarrels*, amongst the few *Brownists*, and other *Independant Sectaries*, which resorted thither the latter end of Queen *Elizabeth's*, King *James* the First's time, and so on, than among the whole *Dutch Nation* ever since they *Reform'd*: 'Tis unaccountable what impertinent *Controversies* arose between them, even to the Colour of *Aaron's Ephod*, whether it were *Blew*, or a *Sea-green*, which made an irreconcilable difference between their *Pastors*, and consequently the *Flocks* divided.

Once indeed there was a *Controversie* amongst the *Dutch*, about some *School-Points*, (and I think that the only Instance can be given) which rose to a great height; but then you must know it was occasioned principally by two great *State-Fallions*, wherein most *Divines*, especially of the *Geneva-Cut*, are too easily made *Properties*: In this, to be sure, they serv'd themselves to purpose; for obtaining by *Power*; what they could not get by *Argument*, one Party became *Judge* of the other, and thrust them down amongst the several *Herd*s of *Tolerated Dissenters*. And here give me leave to observe a farther Evidence of the peaceable Temper and Disposition of those People; for tho' the *ablest*, and most *learned* in their *Government*, have all along laugh'd at the *Stoical Fatality*, and *Reprobation-Rigour*s of their *Divines*, and know what hard measure the *Remonstrants* the *Arminians* had met withal; yet never thought it worth while to have the Debate reviv'd, which might only revive new *Exasperations* about insignificant *Opinions*; or, as I find it express'd in a late Poem, for *Points* by neither Party understood. On the other side, to return home, how differently have these *Disputes* been manag'd amongst us, and how vexationously continued? *Arminian* and *Papist*, pass'd a long time for *Terms* synonymous; which not only the *Pulpit-Beautifieurs*, but several *Grandees* of the *House*, maliciously apply'd to every *Orthodox Divine*, and indeed all others; who would not go along with them in those cursed *Defutations* they then brought upon *Church* and *State*; which having wretchedly

wretchedly affected, how did the *Religious Broil* multiply upon their *Hands*? With what implacable Enmity, did the *Presbyterian* and *Independent* prosecute each other? And how violent in their several ways, both against them, and one another, were the numerous Spawn of *Equivocal Sells*, which like the overflowing *Nile*, their *Deluge* of Mischiefs so fatally produc'd? Insomuch, as when *Cromwel* had bestrid the *Commonwealth*, and set himself in the *Saddle*, he was presum'd to connive at several *Church of England-Congregations*, both in *Publick Parishes*, and *Private Assemblies*, in spite to the *Presbyterians*, and other *Sectaries*, whom he dreaded as much as the *Loyal Party*; and did, with reason, expect they should improve those *Calumnies*, and *Invectives* against him, whereof he had been the grand Promoter against their *Rightful*, and *Lawful King*; and so he found it to his End, which that perplexity and vexation he met with from *Fanaticks* of all sorts, and in all Places, *City*, *Country*, but especially his *Army*, was presum'd to hasten.

'Tis true, when the *Legislative Power*, the other day, thought fit to establish them an *Indulgence*, there was a Project set on-foot to make *Two Sticks* one, (to use their own *Canting Terms*) and several Proposals laid down in order thereunto; yet we find them still separated from one another, and the several Parties, upon every little occasion, dividing among themselves, tho' much Art is used to smother and conceal it: At the best, it was but a *Flourish*, a *Cord of Vanity*, which bound them together, and it held accordingly; neither can you expect otherwise, upon consideration of the *Causes* which that great *Undertaker* assigns of those *Divisions*, the Root from whence their *Discords* spring: Come they not hence, even *Two Sticks* of our *Lusts*? Whatever you find to have been the Cause of them, whether *Spiritual Pride*, or a *Contentious Disposition*, or an *Affectation* of *Singularity*, or *Error of Opinion*, or *Admiration of Mens Persons*, or a *Sourness of Spirit*, or an *Ambition* of drawing *Disciples* after us: Let the Cause be what it will, it must be remov'd, &c. All which is sooner said than done; such *Pecadillo's*, and of so long Continuance, are not easily dislodg'd: Although he might as well have taken his *Character* from *St. Paul's Perillous Times*, which he foretells in the last Days, when Men should be *Heady*, *High-minded*, *Covetous*, *Proud*, *Boasters*, &c. so far from growing better, as he declares they should wax worse and worse, *deceiving*, and being *deceived*. Now, Sir, whatever Censure I may incur from others, my Appeal is to your self, whether the Account here given of these People be any other, than what their daily Practices do sadly verify?

² Tim. 3.
Ver. 9.

lie? And if left to their own *Culture*, and *Ingeniety*, any likelihood they should reform? 'Tis grown as customary, as habitual with them, to *thwart*, *contradict*, and *oppose*, as with the *Dutch* to live quietly, and *mind their own business*: From which *Disposition* of theirs, I may continue the *Disparity*, and observe,

Thirdly, How their constant application to *Business* and *Employment*, afford them no time to *dream* of *New Lights*, or trouble themselves about any other *Perswasion*, as to *Religion*, than what they were brought up in: For, as at their first *Establishment*, there were *Three* predominant *Ways of Opinion*, (I won't say *Doctrine*) and *Worship*, which they had then Reform'd themselves into, *Lutherans*, *Calvinists*, and *Anabaptists*; so the *Toleration* more especially extended to them, and has been generally continued down in the same *Families*, from *Father* to *Children*, ever since; neither is it so usual with them to *flirt up and down*, from one *Maggotty Perswasion* to another, as amongst us. Those upstart puny *Sects*, which arose of later Days, are mostly *Foreign*, and mostly from *England* too, as the *Brownists*, and *Independants* first, the *Sabbatarians* after them, then *Quakers*, *Muggletonians*, and what not? Who have prevail'd with some of the *Natives* to be as foolish and mad as themselves, but not many; and, perhaps, had they been kept to the same *Thoughtfulness* at home for *Bread*, and all other *Necessaries* of *Life*, would not so wantonly have gone *a-Whoring* with their own *Inventions*.

And the like reason may be given, that there are not so many *Libertines*, *Atheistical*, *Profane Persons*, as in many other *Parts*, where all *Religions* are *Tolerated*: It cannot seem strange there should be some without any; and that there are not more, shall not be attributed so much to their *Vertue* as *Necessity*; for not only their *Mechanicks* and *Tradesmen*, but *Persons* of the best *Quality*, are oblig'd to the like *Care* and *Industry*, as to the *Concerns* of *Humane* *Life*. The *Ground* on which their many populous *Cities* stand, is of small *Compass*; and the *Rents* of that little *Land* they have, are very low, not able to maintain any one in the *Port* of a *Gentleman*, (that is, an *Idleman*, which is their *Term* for that degree) whereof as there are few *Ancient Families* amongst them, so the *Children* of those that are, as likewise of their *Chief Magistrates*, and *Rich Merchants*, are constantly brought up to some *Employment*, *Military* or *Civil*, with an *Education* agreeable thereunto, which, together with their *Natural Disposition*, keeps their *Thoughts* fix'd upon things really *advantageous*; and so you shall generally find them very *intent* upon their *Designs*, and *assiduous*

in their *Application*. Will you give me leave to apply this, and observe how opposite their Course is to that of our *Mercurial Wits*, who being born to great *Fortunes*, and valued for the great Worth of those *Predecessors* which rais'd them, as if nothing else were wanting which should recommend them to the World, think themselves above any serious *Application*, either as to *Business*, or *Knowledge*. I need not tell you how little, or no, *Education* our young Master has from his very *Cradle*: how careful the good *Lady-Mother* is, he should not be kept in too much at *School*; what a fruitless Figure he makes in the *University*, and when he comes up to the *Extravagancies* of the Town, is as much for living above *sober Sense*, as our *Dissenters* above *Ordinances*. God forbid this should be a *General Rule*; yet it could be wish'd there were more *Exceptions*, than daily Experience will permit us to observe: *Liberty of Life*, tho' not so much clamour'd for, is as much in Vogue as *Liberty of Conscience*, and the one doubtless consequent of the other: for the practical *Atheist* hath been ever thought to introduce the *Speculation*; and when Men are left free to all *Religions*, that is the proper time to set up for none. I remember, during *Cromwel's Usurpation*, the *Leviathan-Doctrine* was first started; and as some *Gentlemen* of too good Parts, unless better employ'd, were industrious to cultivate and improve it, so many of our *Airy Sparks* about Town, and elsewhere, became their sordid Imitators: Nothing would go down with them, but a *State of War*, with a total Abolition of all difference between Good and Evil, Right and Wrong. Now, whether it was their being weary, or ashamed, of such unreasonable *Notions*, or an affectation of *Novelty*, the delight of vain Minds, *Deism* seems to have superseded that, and is become at present the Darling-Subject of every young *Libertine's* Discourse; who will presume to expose, and run down *Reveald Religion* with all Confidence imaginable, altho' the little *Impertinent* never thought a sober hour in its life; and understands the *Philosophy of Matter and Motion*, no farther, than that his own Brains are in a continual *Hurry*: Not but that these *Engines* too are set on work by some more plodding Heads, who have several secret Designs in exploding the Authority of *Scripture*, upon the *Politick*, as well as *Prophane Account*; and, among the rest, to buoy up such *Models of Government*, as the *Belief* thereof expressly overthrows. Here then arises the main *Quere*: What shall we do with such *Dissenters* as these? The *Sceptick*, the *Deist*, the *Atheist*, under what *Class* shall we place them? They have the same *Plea* to be consider'd, which the others always brought; that is, *Number and Wealth*; being

being able to vie, in either Particular, with any of their dissenting *Factions*; and, for ought I see, in a short time, may outdo them all; since daily Experience assures us 'tis the last result of *Enatick Zeal*; for being *over-boated* and *weary*, with running its several *Courses of Faction* and *Opinion*, it sits down in the end, and centres here. And yet, all this while, the rest will not see what a fine Thread they have spun for themselves, as well as us; whilst the one are undermining the *Church of England*, these others are doing the same to the *Christian Religion*: Altho', to speak impartially, the *Lathside* some Divines have taken, as to the *Socinian*, and other Points of like Nature, must be acknowledg'd not a little conducing to this Grand *Apostacy*; so readily will *Corrupt Minds* improve bad *Principles*, deny those *Mysteries* by wholesale, which some *Mens rash and nice Enquiries* had made more perplex'd and intricate, than the *Simplicity of True Religion* stands in need of, or did ever design. And this, Sir, is the result of an *Unlimited Toleration*; which going on at this rate, (unless the *Pater Noster Men* interpose their *Inquisition*) must necessarily end in a *Sit anima mea cum Philosophis*.

Fourthly, Another thing which makes the *Dutch Toleration* sit the more *easy*, is, That Their *Government* is most *exact* and *punctual* in the *Administration of Justice*, and *Execution of Laws*; which as they are enact'd at first, upon the mature deliberation of a few sober understanding Men, with sole regard to the *Common Weal*, the *Publick Good*; so, once proclaim'd, there is no avoiding their true *Import*, or escaping the *Penalty* of a *Violation*: The *Lawyers* among them dare not *Open*, or so much as *Quetch* against what their Superiours have thought fit to *establish*, much less study *Flaws*, and *hanniver out Niceties*, to gratifie Men, in frustrating, whatever good the *Legislative Power* design'd, and put them to the trouble of an *Explanatory Act* next *Session*, which runs the same *risque*: Yet that we are under these very Circumstances, I need not tell you; which, with the *Insolency of Faction*, the *remissness* and *indifferency* of the *Executive Power*, hath brought us to too high an *Affinity* with that deplorable Estate of the *Jewish Anarchy*, where every one did what seem'd right in his own eyes. Otherwise, we have *Laws* more than enough; and could they have executed themselves, all *Allegations* for a *Toleration* had been long since quash'd; not only the *Externals of God's Publick Worship* had been kept up in *Decency* and *Order*, but every *Man's Temporal Concern*, his *Right* and *Property*, fix'd upon a much surer *Bottom*. On the contrary, a *Licentiousness* and *Indifferency*, as to *Religious Duties*, hath so far *unprincipled* and

and debauch'd Men's Minds, that our modern Faith is not only without Works, but so wholly confin'd to some *Spiritual Chimera's*, as there is little of Truth or Trust in the ordinary Transactions of *Human Life*: Our *Meum* and *Tuum* is in a very precarious Condition, what with the Latitude of their new Notions, and the advantage to be taken from the *Perplexity*, the *Niceties* of our *Laws*, with the little *Tricks* of Practice, so shamefully now-a-days *alla-mode*, an undesigning *Integrity* can scarce tell whom to trust, and is frequently at a loss, either to recover Right, or repel Wrong: Neither will it be ever otherwise, as long as so many *Law-jobbing Make-bates* are suffered to swarm in every County throughout the Kingdom. Were *Grievances* to be redress'd by their Malignity and *epidemick Contagion*, I know no one thing sooner to be consider'd; that it is otherwise, you and I cannot help. In short, Sir, that a *Strict and Regular Execution of Laws*, is the Life and Soul of any Government, take these two different Instances: In the *Spanish Netherlands*, we find the *Romish Religion* solely establish'd, with the *Rigour*, though not the Name, of that *Inquisition*; which was the most plausible *Plea* for their first *Defection*: On the other side, in the *United Provinces*, there is a general *Toleration*; both which, the *Uniformity* of the one, and *Indulgence* of the other, are supported, and kept up, by a vigorous Execution of such *Laws* as are thought most proper thereunto; and if either, the latter are more exact and severe, by reason it is so natural for different *Opinions* to clash with, and thwart each other; so far are they from admitting them into the *Magistracy*, giving the least way to *New Lights*, and *Fanciful Enthusiasms* there, as well knowing such a *Freedom* is enough to make any Government as monstrous as that *Picture*, which had an *Hanc Populus* affix'd.

Fifthly, I shall only add farther, that the *Dutch Toleration* was establish'd in the *Infancy* of the *Reformation*, when Men had a sincere and unreign'd *Zeal* for the Truth of Religion, desired nothing more than to have her free'd from *Ignorance* and *Superstition*, such *spurious Doctrines*, and burthensome *Ceremonies*, as rust of Time, neglect of Enquiry, and, above all, the *Intrigues of Papal Usurpation*, had impos'd upon the World, and for several *Centuries* together made pass for *Catholick*. Now, although this *Zeal* was not always according to *Knowledge*, the different, and, in some Places, not justifiable *Methods* which were taken, did much obstruct, ay, and scandalize so good an Undertaking; yet the main Point being gain'd, in shaking off the *Roman Yoke*, whether out of *Sincerity*, *Prudence*, or *Pity*, I shall not determine, Men generally sat down abundantly satisfied

satisfied with the Enjoyment of that Persuasion, which made the deepest Impression upon their *Minds*: And this happened in such a juncture for the *United Provinces*, as perhaps no Age will be ever able to parallel: For the *Spanish Interest* prevailing in *Brabant*, and *Flanders*, with the *Walloon Provinces*, whoever could, or would not submit, retreated higher, as likewise great multitudes out of *France* and *Germany*; which made them the Pantheon, the common Receptacle of all People pretending to *Liberty of Conscience*, the only thing then desired, and in the enjoyment whereof (whether well or ill-inform'd, we are not now to enquire) they were abundantly satisfied.

How much the World (especially amongst us) is cool'd as to such a Temper, and heated as to much worse Dispositions, our many Feuds and Factions, unreasonable Cavils, and implacable Enmities, too sadly declare. Men now-a-days, bellow out the Protestant Religion, the Protestant Religion, as the Jews of old, The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord, as if the Name, or Relation thereunto, might Authorize the grossest Impieties, their wilful Perjuries, and Seditious Practices, the Violation of Publick Laws and Disturbance of Publick Peace, even to a most unnatural Rebellion, and execrable Regicide: This, Sir, impartially speaking, is undeniable Matter of Fact; and if ever the Nation returns to its Wits again, sober Sense, and sound Principles, such Principles will be recorded with a very black Character, the Reproach not only of the Reformation, but of every thing which tends to true Religion, like Pharisees and Zealots among the Jews, sacrificing all to their own gross Hypocrisie, sordid Avarice, and self-will'd Ambition; and God grant they do not bring the like fatal End upon our Place and Nation: The dreadful apprehension whereof makes not only my Hand, but my Heart tremble; and, amidst such melancholy Reflections, wish to have been born in an Age, when Wise Men had had the Ascendent of Fools, and Honest Men of Knaves: On the contrary, as things now stand, you know the Close of that Old Rhime, Knaves and Fools will quite undo us.

Neither can our Prospect be much better, if we look upon the Reformation abroad: What a strange Indifferency have some Great Princes of the Empire lately discover'd? And how gross the Apostacy of others? To be sure, where there was a General Toleration of Lutheran and Calvinists, together, with the several other differing Persuasions, Anabaptists, Arrians, Socinians, &c. they are either wholly extirpated, as in *Bohemia*, *Moravia*, the Two *Austria's*, *Poland*, &c. or in a fair Tendency thereunto, as at present in
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Hungary, and Transylvania: In all which Places they were very numerous; but what with contending amongst themselves, and innovating, or opposing the *Establish'd Government*, they have been either worne out, or beaten out, with all the contempt and ease imaginable: And that the same Design is carrying on amongst us, and the same Event expected, they must be wilfully blind who do not see, what with *Licentiousness* on the one hand, and *Hypocrisy* on the other, the no-Reality of such as pretend most, and great Indifference of all the rest; as we are naturally prone to all sorts of Streams, so we seem strangely dispos'd (and the more, because unwilling to believe it) to fall into that which we have all along pretended most vehemently to avoid.

Thus, Sir, have I impartially, and perhaps too freely, told you, what I know, and what I think of the *Dutch Toleration*; yet without this *Freedom*, it had been impossible to set you in a *True Light*, so as to discover the gross mistakes of our *Commonwealth Pretenders*, who are always admiring the *Hollanders*, with the Excellent *Administration* People live under there; which nevertheless they understand no more, than how the *Empire*, and *Army of Russia* is now manag'd during the *Czar's Absence*; and the many *Projects* they are so troublesome withal, both in *Theory and Practice*, are as opposite thereunto, as one *Pole* to the other: Yet, since things are brought to that pass, as a *Toleration* must be, give me leave to tell you, that venturing in any other than a *Dutch Bottom*, will shipwreck the whole *Cargo*; that is, without a *Metaphor*, keeping the *Magistracy* in such hands as shall be of one *Piece, Uniform, and Unanimous* in the *Management* thereof; for which I shall briefly lay down these following Reasons, and so end your Trouble.

1st. We shall have some Face of *Government* in an *Establish'd National Religion*; which I mention solely upon a *Civil Account*, and that not only in regard to the outward *Decorum*, (which yet ought to be consider'd) but the absolute Necessity thereof, as the only means of preventing those continual *Contrasts and Caballings*, which the several *Factions* will have one against another; and if admitted to *Debates*, all together against that which is uppermost; the *Mischief*, and *Inconveniencies* whereof, can no other way be redress'd, than by fixing the *Ruling Power* in one *Perswasion*, to whom it shall solely appertain to take care of the whole, see the several *Parties* enjoy their private *Opinions*, without the least *Infraction* upon our *Publick Peace*. On the other side, let us reflect, first, upon the *Undecency* of the thing, how preposterous it must seem to any Man of *Sence*, whether *Native or Forreigner*, that the *Sword*

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should

should dance attendance from one Place to another, according to the Caprice of each prevailing *Fashion*. This Year's *Lord Mayor* has a Conscience of their *Latitude*, as to *Trim* it between *Chair* and *Conventicle*, without the least regret; whereas his *Successor* may have one so *judicious*, and *pragmatical*, as not to come within the Sound of St. Paul's *Organ*, or under the roof of that *sumptuous*, and therefore *sumptuous* *Structure*. But then too having got the *Sword* to go their own way, how strangely must it wander up and down, as each Party prevail, into the *Chair*; one Year it must attend a *Presbyterian* Meeting, the next, perhaps, will fall to the *Independent's* Lot, and the *Anabaptists* will ill relent it to go without their turn; nay, we are not sure but the *Quakers* may put in their Claim, and without any Offence to the *Inward Man*, desire it should attend their *Motions* on a bulk in *Grace-church-street*. This, Sir, I take to be as *Natural* to the aspiring *Spirits* of those several *Schismatical Herds*, as *Milk* to a *Calf*, and they will *low* as much if kept without it; yet how decent this will be, how unbecoming the *State*, and *Gravity* of any *Magistracy*, I leave for you, and the *World* to judge. However that of *Publick Security* is much more to be consider'd; for whatever *Pleas* may be alledg'd, or *Protestations* made, we know how things went, when the *weak Conscience* had got the strongest *Sword*. *Dominion* was then founded in *Grace*, and the appointed time come for the *Saints* to inherit the *Earth*, and bring in *Subjection* all the *Powers* of *Darkness*.

Today The *Ancient Grandeur and Hospitality* of our *City-Magistracy*, and proportionably of all other *Corporations*, will be hereby continued and kept up; which since it came into these hands, hath been most *kindly* lighted, and *diminid* for the Character which our *Poor-Law* gave of that curst *Shinier*, who first led the Van to *Fashion* and *Frugality*, is true of all the rest. *Cool* are their *Kneebent*, the *their Brains* are *hot*. To speak freely, a *speaking*, single soul'd *Selfary*, cannot exert it self to any thing that is *Great*, or *Generous*, *Cain* is their *Godliness*, and *Profit* their *Reformation*; in order whereunto, upon Enquiry, you shall find, that those *Great Offices* wherein worthy *Citizens* were formerly wont to expend several thousand Pounds, are now made to bear their own Charges, and bring somewhat into Pocket too. And, as a farther ill consequence hereof, there are those will sell you all *Places* of *Inferiour Trust* are dispos'd off accordingly; and whoever makes a hard *Bargain*, will be more *satisfied* for his own *Reimbursement*, than the *Commonweal*. 'Twas nobly said of *Tully*, *Nec quicquam aliud videntur est nobis, quos Populus Romanus hoc in Gradu collocavit, nisi ne* quid

quid privatis studiis de operibus publicis detrahendum; neither can it possibly go well with any Government, if Men in Publick Places have not *Publick Spirits*, under which defect I am afraid our poor Nation, at present more especially, very much labours.

3dly, This will make an exact *Discrimination* between the truly conscientious *Dissenter*, and the *Politick*, the *Faction*, the *Intriguer*; for when every Man must declare to what *Party* of *Church* or *Commonwealth* he will join, and is oblig'd therein to abide, (whether in the *Lord*, or not, the same *Lord* shall judge at last) our sundry shifting *Proteus's*, such *Amphibious Christians*, as can live both in *Land* and *Water*, *Church* and *Conventicle*, (and that, more especially, to get *Prey*) will intirely be defeated of their many base Ends; *Conscience* shall have its full *Liberty*, but the *State-Edict* wholly abridg'd from promoting their *Maggotty Communion*, *Whil'd Innocencies*; or abusing the *Sacred Robe* of *Magistracy*, for a *Clash* of *Malevolence*, *Avarice*, or both; and were this reasonable distinction effectually prosecuted, and their little factious *Properties* excluded from voting the *Sword* into such unworthy Hands, it must fall in courie to some honest Man's Lot, who will be the *Minister of God* for good, and bear it not in vain. This likewise to be hop'd, this may tend by degrees to the better Information of the deluded People, make them reflect upon the *Inconsistency* of their *Principles*, and Unwarrantableness of their *Schisms*, how naturally they tend to a *licentious Prophanation* of all things *Sacred* and *Crown*, whilst Men of corrupt Minds can so easily prostitute the most solemn Obligations of *Religion*, and *Conscience*, to two such servile respects as *Interest*, and *Fame*. Neither are we to despair, but it may work a *Reformation* in the Persons themselves; for generally when Men get nothing by acting the *Hypocrite*, they care no longer to wear the *Mask*, chuse rather to appear as they really are, and fall at last to desire a right Information of Things, since *Error* and *Deceit* has fail'd in those Advantages, which were formerly the main Support of their *Unrighteous Mammon*. But whatever the Event be as to them, I am confident you are satisfied no Government can be safe in such slippery hands; for they that can be any thing, will be every thing, and are good for nothing; having betray'd their own *Consciences*, is it possible they should demur serving others in the like kind?

4thly, But to come to that which is most considerable in this case, indeed the main Support of every Government: By this means all *Publick Deliberations*, and *Resolves*, will be carried on in a smooth and even, steady, uniform Courie, free from *Faction*, *Opposition*, with the many other by-respects of *Intriguing Interests*: This, I say, in a

great measure, at least, would abate the several *Fuels*, ay, and unreasonable *Expences* too, at the *Election* of our *National Representatives*, and secure their *Debate*, when *Assembled*, from frequent *Embarrassments*, according to the *French* Term, the *Obstructions* and *Delays*, which such as cannot obtain their own private, *pettish Humours*, are prone to interpose in the most weighty *Transactions*, tho' never so prejudicial to the *Common Good*. In like manner all other sinister *Practices*, *Plots*, and *Brangles*, whether in *Towns*, *Corporate*, *City*, or *County*, would be reduc'd to something of *Temper*, *Noise* and *Noisence* being once excluded, such Men in course must come in place, as would speak to the purpose, and act upon a *Principle*. And if any one objects this would be too great an *Invasion* upon their *Liberties*, I shall only reply, as at first, 'tis no more than what their admired Neighbours, the *Hollanders*, did upon their own accord, to prevent the dangerous Consequences of their many *Popular* *Fleets* and *Tumultuous Assemblies* when they gave way that all their *Rights* were to be devolv'd upon a few sober understanding Men, who knew better how to act for the *Common Welfare* than themselves: But whether many, or few (for this propounds only the exclusion of some, no alteration in the whole *Constitution*, as well knowing neither *Oligarchy*, nor *Polyarchy* will do with us, however there be zealous Pretenders to both) so they be all of one Piece, Business will go on much the smoother, and be sooner brought to a Conclusion: And therefore give me leave to transferr *St. Paul's* Comparison, from the *Church* to the *Body Politick*, it being equally dangerous to them both, as in the *Natural*, if the *Head* be a *Monarch*, and the *Feet* *Commonwealths-men*; the *Eye* of the *Presbyterian*, and the *Ear* of the *Congregationist* *Persecution*, with the *Devil* and all of little *Maggotty* *Sellaries* grumbling in the *Belly*, what care can be taken of the whole? What will become of it in the end? Amongst sundry pretty *Crotchets*, which in the *Low Countries* hang out for *Signs*, there is one at *Harlem*, call'd the *Musket*; that is, a *Barrel* of *Beer* between two *Dray-men*, turn'd *Back to Back*, and so pulling two contrary ways; I have known a *Nation* standing in this unhappy Posture for nigh three Sixty Years together, with these aggravating Circumstances, that as there have been many more than two *Pullers*, so they pull'd more than Twenty several ways, that the poor *Vessel* hath been able to hold out thus long is much; yet that it should hold out much longer, will be more to admiration.

sibly, That the *Monarch*, and *Monarchy*, will be hereby very much lessend, cannot be disput'd: for, as we see, how fatal it is, when a *Prince* differs in his Perswasion from the *Establish'd Religion*,

So one of that Persuasion is as little secure, if his *Ministers*, with other inferior *Officers* and *Dependants*, are of different *Sentiments*, and *Inclinations*; and that not only as to *Divine* Matters, but the very *Nature* and *Original* of all *Humane* *Constitutions*, and *Civil Societies*; And whoever wears the *Crown* of *England*, upon any other than the *Old Church* of *England* Principle, will neither live that fit ease, nor himself long safe; for notwithstanding the many *Protestations*, and *Acknowledgments*, which either *Flattery*, or *Interest*, may for some time, oblige them unto, there is not *One in Ten* of the several *Factions*, could they have their own *Wills*, would endure a *Monarchy*, any more than the *Kingdom* of *Heaven* a *Commonwealth*. That such a Book as *Ludlow's Memoirs*, should come abroad at this time of day, is somewhat odd, and argues his *Admirers* Men of no little *Assurance*: yet really however it may prevail upon the insatuated *Selfaries*, the many *Plots* and *Counter-Plots* there discover'd, their implacable *Enmities* one against another, perfidious *Hypocrisies*, and clandestine *Underminings*, with a continued *Irresolution* as to any thing of *Accord* and *Settlement*, must convince every Man of Sense, that (like their *Infernal* *Author*) their sole *Talent* lay in doing *Mischief*, opposing, and pulling down; which, having effected, they could no more agree what should succeed, than the *Mob* of *Capua*, when they had brought things into the same condition. Read over his whole *Second Volume* with a serious *Attention*; and then tell me, whether *Hell* it self can be represented in greater *Confusion*, than he doth there the *Conduct* of *Affairs*, the *Contrasts*, and *Counterminings* of the several *Usurping Powers*, till things being brought to the *Extremity* of *Distraction*, with an *Expence* of *Blood* and *Treasure*, never before parallell'd, they were forc'd, like the *Evil Spirit* in the *Gospel*, to return from whence they set out, and cease troubling the *World*, till their former *Feats*, and its own *Follies* should be quite forgot; yet these were our *Commonwealth-Patriots*, the *Keepers* of our *Liberties*, and what not: From whom, and all such, God keep this poor *Nation* for evermore.

Sibly, Were I not sure, you would expect something in reference to the *Church* of *England*, I had been wholly silent as to that Point, being of a Persuasion somewhat more sanguine, than most of her *Sons*, *Clergy* as well as *Lay*; viz. that what a wise *Observer* said of the whole *Nation* in general, is more applicable here, *None can destroy her but her self*. There is, as I hinted just now, so strick and mutual a dependance between the *Crown* and *People*, that they must both stand and fall together: And, give me leave farther to add, we must never expect a settled *State*, or continued *Peace*, without keeping them

them both up, whatever *Distractions* some may lie under, and *Necessities* others plead, which perhaps themselves made, to bring in their *New-fangled Devices*. 'Tis true, whenever a *Nation* is so unhappy, as to be divided within it self, fall into *Parties*, and *Factions*, upon any account, either *Ecclesiastical*, or *Civil*; as some *Church-men* will make themselves, or be made, *Proprietors* therein, so the *Church* must expect to bear her proportion in such *Distractions*, and that to a large degree; yet still if the main *Body* keeps steady to its self, walks by the same *Rule*, and minds the same *Thing*, such a reserve of *Grace* and *Providence* will constantly attend her, as though persecuted, she shall never be forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed; and it very rarely happens some great Good does not come out of that *Evil*. But if she forsakes her self, folds her Arms in a careless Despair, or consults her Peace by an *Union* with *Faction* and *Schism*, and as the judicious Bishop *Laney* observ'd, pulls down her old Walls, her *Confessions* of *Doctrine*, and *Canons* of *Discipline* (like the foolish *Trojans*) take in a comprehensive Horse, full of those very *Enemies*, which have used all other means, tho' God be pleas'd to vanquish, to effect her Ruine. This would be a *Pecunia tua ex te*, and as the same good Man further declares, against all the *Rules* of *Wisdom* and *Government*, by which it was ever thought necessary, that the People should conform to the *Laws* of the *Church*, never that the *Church* should conform to the *Humours* of the *People*; and therefore, as he very well distinguishes, to such as be content to leave their *Faults* and *Errors* behind them, we ought to set our *Gates* wide open, and need not pull down our *Walls*; but if they bring their *Errors*, *Animosities*, and divided Judgements along with them, to admit such, only secures them from *Punishment*, but leaves them free to all other *Causes* of *Dissension*, or rather fortifies and animates them to pursue their *Differences* with the greater Violence. God, to be sure receives none but upon *Repentance* and *Amendment*; and why his *Church* should do otherwise, I am yet to learn; if they will not be the same with us, let them Herd by themselves, and not come among us, their Room is better than their Company. And therefore I have always suspected, either want of *Understanding*, or *Affection*, in those Persons, who trouble their Heads so much in that *Affair*, without any regard to the *Caution* in the *Gospel*, as likewise the reason of the thing, and will be treating with, ay, and courting too, those *Wolves*, because they appear in *Sheeps* Cloathing; or can otherwise alledge some plausible *Pretextes*, which the *Devil* is never without, nor fails of a supply to such as act on his behalf; whereas *Master of Fidd* hath all along spoke quite the contrary, the continued Experience of nigh an Hundred Years most sadly assur'd us, that they could never be

Last Ser-
mon at
Court,
p. 26.

be oblig'd by any *Kindness*, nor satisfy'd with any *Condescension*. And, now, Sir, without doubt you must be thoroughly tir'd, and find the Trouble I was *complemented* into, return'd upon your self, receiving a *Volume* instead of a Letter. Yet, be assur'd, 'twas with some difficulty it ended here; for having once set my Thoughts *afloat*, the *Current* ran so strong, I could not *stem* its Force so as to stop at pleasure: And by this you may see confirm'd what I have hitherto entertain'd you withal; for if a single Person cannot take his *Liberty*, in so little an Affair too, without somewhat of Inconvenience and Trouble, how much worse must it prove in a whole *Body*, a *Community* of *People*, who are so easily hurried on, without knowing what they do, or from whom they set, till all end in *Mischief* and *Confusion*: And therefore give me leave to declare, that the *Restraints* propounded in the *Premises*, whatever satisfaction they may give you, and some few of your *Temper*, will be no ways acceptable to that extravagant *Licentiousness*, both *Corporal*, and *Spiritual*, *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil*, which hath so long had the Ascendant amongst us, and bears too high Affinity to that Acknowledgment in *Latin*; *Nec Morbum ferre possumus, nec Remedium*.

God, in his due time, make us sensible both of the *Folly* and *Danger*, which such Courses tend unto: In the mean while, and ever, continue to defend our *Church* from all her *Enemies*, *within*, as well as *without*; the daily Prayer of,

April 8th
1698.

S I R,

Your, &c.

— M — n.

FINIS.